

## Water Quality (Taste, Odour, Colour)

The **taste, odour and colour of water** can vary from tap to tap and can be impacted by naturally occurring minerals, treatment processes and internal plumbing.

Residents own personal likes and dislikes can also influence a perception of taste and odour.

Some **common tastes and odours** include musty – mouldy - earthy, chlorine, rusty and metallic.

**Chlorine** is added to the water supply at Council's water treatment plants and reservoirs to remove harmful bacteria and protect water quality. A small residual of chlorine is generally present in your drinking water once it reaches your tap and from time to time you may notice a slight chlorine taste or smell. Council staff carefully control and monitor this process to ensure the residual poses no risk to health. Seasonal changes in demand, a property distance from the water filtration plant and unavoidable changes to system operation can impact the degree of chlorine in the water.

**Musty, Mouldy or Earthy** tastes and odours in the drinking water can be caused by organic growth within water pipes. Mould and bacteria can breed in the internal plumbing when certain jointing compounds are used for domestic fittings or appliances, or when cold water pipes pass closely to hot water pipes that are not insulated. Water pipes in areas of the supply system with low flow rates can also create an environment for organic growth.

Drinking water with a **Rusty or Metallic** taste generally contains excessive iron, manganese and other metals. When these materials are present in high levels, customers can also notice a change in the colour of the water, this is known as discoloured water. The discoloured water may vary from the extreme red colour to an almost unnoticeable very light tea colour.

**Other contributors** to poor water quality include

- **Tap Washers** some tap washers produce tastes
- **Newly installed kitchen mixer taps** contain a lubricant that is water and corrosive resistant, non-toxic, and suited for hot and cold potable water but may present tastes
- **Aerators on kitchen taps** often collect material that can cause taste complaints when combined with chlorine
- **Water sitting in plumbing overnight**—it is a good idea to let water run for a while before using for drinks
- **Home Filtration Systems** Poorly maintained filtration systems may in themselves become a source of contamination
- **Hoses on newly installed dishwashers and washing machines** can cause tastes in nearby taps
- **Old plumbing/pipes can affect the water quality producing tastes, colours and odours.**